



**T**HE TRIP DOWNTOWN at four A.M. on deserted freeways took only twenty-two minutes. The black-and-white slick-back that the RHD dicks were forced to drive now finally made a wide turn off Broadway, its headlights sweeping the south side of the Glass House. It pulled up to the security station. Sergeant Welch showed his badge, signed them all in, and drove into the huge underground parking garage that adjoined Parker Center.

The building was known as "the Glass House" to everybody on the job because of the excessive amount of plate glass that draped its huge boxy shape. The otherwise nondescript building had been designed in the fifties, which had proved to be a decade of architectural blight. The parking garage next door went down nine stories underground. The detectives found a spot on U-3, and both led Shane out of the parking complex, through a security door, and into the third basement of police headquarters. They took the elevator to six and got off at the Robbery/Homi-

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cide Division, which took up half the floor and was fronted by a thick glass partition.

Garson Welch buzzed them through and found the OOD, a thin-faced sergeant in uniform, sitting at a computer just inside the squad room. "Is Captain Halley around? He was supposed to get a call out on this activity report."

The sergeant nodded and pointed down the hall. "Interview room Three," he said.

They moved single file down the linoleum-floored corridor and turned into a small, windowless interrogation room that contained a scarred desk, two wooden chairs, and Robbery/Homicide Captain Bud Halley. Halley had his jacket off and was showing the beginnings of a twelve-hour beard, having missed his shave at four A.M. He had also missed two belt loops. Other than that, he was a remarkably handsome, fit, prematurely gray man in his mid-forties. He was Shane's Southwest Homicide Bureau commander. They had a good professional relationship. In the two years Shane had been assigned to Southwest Detectives, Halley had given him two excellent evaluation reports. As Shane came through the door, Captain Halley motioned him to a chair. "You guys don't have to stick around unless you need him. I'm gonna send him home after the activity report," he said to the two detectives.

"Thanks, Cap, check you later," Welch said as they left the room and closed the door behind them.

"We only have a few minutes and then God knows what happens," Halley said.

"A few minutes? What're you talking about? You're doing the DFAR. What's the rush?"

"'Cept I'm not doing it. Deputy Chief Thomas Mayweather is on his way in. He's doing it."

"The head of Special Investigations Division is doing my activity report? You can't be serious. Why him?"

"Chief Brewer ordered it," Halley said.

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"Same question, then."

"Don't you know what Ray Molar's assignment was?"

"Yeah... he was Mayor Clark Crispin's bodyguard and driver. He was also killing his wife with a nightstick. He fired a shot at me. Barbara Molar is my wit. This should be a slam dunk. So what's the deal?"

"Lemme give you the secret to survival around here." Shane waited for the punch line. "Everything that's not department history is department politics. Chief Brewer was awakened by Mayor Crispin, who called the Big Kahuna from the Dark Side, who got roused off his sailboat at the marina. He was planning to sail across the channel for a long weekend in Avalon. Now, instead of salt air and sea chanteys, Deputy Chief Mayweather is coming here, in his fucking yacht attire, looking to tear you a new asshole."

"Cap, let me say this again, so none of us miss it. Steeltooth was killing his wife. He shot first. If I hadn't returned fire, we'd both be in the county icebox bleeding from the ears. I know for a fact Ray has two spousal-abuse beefs in his IAD package. He's a regular at rage-management counseling. Aside from that, we both know he was a head thumper from way back. You don't get the nickname Steeltooth just because your last name's Molar."

"Don't convince me. Make Mayweather believe it," Halley said softly.

Shane's hands started to shake. He was coming down from a two-hour adrenaline rush. He had killed Ray Molar, his ex-partner, a man he had once respected, then came to fear, and then finally to hate. His emotions hovered just below consciousness. He knew he couldn't afford a mistake, so he pushed personal feelings aside and concentrated on his plight, his survival instincts taking precedence.

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Deputy Chief Mayweather was six three and ebony black. He had a shaved head and always carried himself with the athletic grace he had shown as a first-string point guard on the UCLA basketball team in the seventies.

He moved through the predawn stillness of the Robbery/Homicide Division and looked at the tired collection of swing-shift detectives who were manning their desks, sneaking glances at the clock, waiting for the day-watch to show up and relieve them. Mayweather stuck his gleaming black head into the interrogation room containing Scully and Halley.

"Let's do this upstairs." Mayweather's voice was cold and smooth, Vaseline on ice. "We'll use the conference room on nine. Bud, see if they got some coffee down here and bring it up." Then, without even looking at Shane, he moved out of the room, leaving them there.

"Good luck," Halley said as Shane got up off his hardwood chair and followed Mayweather, who was already halfway down the hall, striding toward the elevators with a Yul Brynner elegance, his arms swinging freely, his hips slightly forward. He was not in yachting attire. He'd dressed for this gig. The suit he wore was charcoal gray, creaseless, and fit him like a second skin. Tom Mayweather could easily have made a nice living on the pages of *GQ*.

Shane moved along behind him like a barefoot, dark-haired, brown-eyed shadow, his own gait more the shuffling stride of a street fighter. Although Shane had always been able to attract women, he found his own looks pugnacious and off-putting. In his mirror, he saw a face marred by cynicism and loneliness. He was always surprised when he heard someone describe him as attractive.

He caught Mayweather at the elevator. Both men remained silent as they waited for the stainless-steel doors to open and take them to the ninth floor, where Tom Mayweather and the other deputy chiefs had their offices down the hall from Chief Burleigh Brewer.

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"Sorry about the Avalon trip, sir," Shane said, going for a little pre-interview suck.

"Let's save everything for when we get the tape running, okay?"

"Sure," Shane said.

The door opened and they stepped in and rode the humming metal box to the light-paneled, green-carpeted executive floor. All the way up, Deputy Chief Mayweather said nothing, but he was staring at Shane's bloodstained bare feet.

Shane had been on nine only once before. He had been in Chief Brewer's office three years ago when he received a Meritorious Service Medal. He had risked his life, the citation said, freeing two children from a burning car wreck on the San Pedro Freeway.

They moved down the hall. Shane glanced out the plate-glass windows and could see the morning sun beginning to light the corners of the buildings across Sixth Street, throwing a fiery glow on the stone roofs and concrete balconies of the old brown buildings that surrounded the huge police monstrosity like tattered memories.

Mayweather opened the door to the conference room, turned on the lights, and left him there.

The room was paneled in the same light-colored wood. It was huge and windowless, being part of the interior structure of the building. On the walls were portraits of all of L.A.'s past police chiefs. The father of the new department, Chief William H. Parker, was hanging in a place of honor on the wall at the head of the table.

They had all learned about Bill Parker in the Academy. In 1934 then-Lieutenant Parker, a law school graduate, was assistant to L.A. police chief James E. Davis. From that post, Parker saw the workings of L.A. city government close-up. The Shaw brothers presided over a corrupt city, and Chief Davis was beholden to the Shaws. Mayor Shaw's brother controlled the Vice Squad and was selling sergeant's tests for five hundred dollars apiece. Work-

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ing with Lieutenant Earl Cook, Bill Parker campaigned for the passage of the city charter amendment that contained Section 202, which provided for a Police Bill of Rights and administrative reviews to protect police officers from inappropriate charges of wrongdoing. That section of the city charter set the model of police disciplinary review that the LAPD still uses today. Portraits of Chiefs Davis, Reddin, Gates, Williams, Parks, and Brewer hung on the walls of the conference room and seemed to glower down at him, silently reproaching him for killing one of L.A.'s finest.

"Guy was murdering his wife," Shane muttered to himself and to the stone-faced gallery of disapproving ex-police chiefs.

Mayweather returned with a tape recorder and plugged it in. He chose the seat at the far end of the table, under the recently hung painting of Burl Brewer.

Mayweather glanced at Sergeant Scully. "You're a sergeant one, is that right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Okay, Shane, you and I don't know each other. I guess we've probably met once or twice, but we're not really acquainted. It's important you know that I'm just here to take your statement. I'm going to try and determine what happened and then make a recommendation to the department as to what our next step should be. A police officer died at your hands. His death may have been completely unavoidable, but either way, we're into a mandatory use-of-force review. I'm not here to hurt you, take advantage of you, or trap you in any way. Okay?"

"I appreciate that, sir."

The door opened and Bud Halley entered with a pot of coffee and three mugs. He poured. They each took one, blew across the steaming surface, then sipped gratefully.

"What goes on here is subject to the Police Bill of Rights under Title One," Mayweather continued, "so this pre-interview will not preempt any of your Skelly rights or privileges guaranteed by Section 202 of the city charter." The Skelly hearing was his

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chance to answer the charges against him before his case went to a Board of Rights, if it got that far.

"This is an administrative review and is subject to the provisions laid down in Section 202. I'm going to record the interview." Mayweather turned the tape on. "Raise your right hand." Shane did as he was instructed. "Do you, Sergeant Shane Scully, swear that all information given by you during this interview is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"

"I do."

"This tape-recorded interview is for use in an Internal Affairs investigation only. For purposes of department statute-of-limitations requirements, today, April sixteenth, will be the due date of this inquiry. If no action is taken within a year of this date, the investigation will officially be determined to be closed. Is this interview being conducted at a convenient time and under circumstances you find acceptable?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you aware that the nature of this interview is to determine if the escalated force that resulted in Lieutenant Molar's death was within departmental use-of-force guidelines?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is April sixteenth, at five-seventeen A.M. We are in the main conference room, on the ninth floor of Parker Center. Present is the interviewer, Deputy Chief Thomas Clark Mayweather. Also present is the officer being interviewed, Sergeant One Shane Scully. Witnessing the interview is Captain Bud Halley. In accordance with departmental guidelines, it is noted that no more than two interrogators are present. Okay"—Mayweather paused and glanced at a crib card in front of him—"Section 202 governs this part of the administrative process and establishes procedures for the completion of a chronological log. If you could take care of that, Captain Halley? And then if you could get us a fresh DR number to file the case under." A DR number was a Division of Records number, issued in all nonarrest reports.

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Bud Halley nodded then took out a pad and pen to begin a chronology.

"Shane, if you could just start at the beginning and tell us what happened this morning . . . Don't leave anything out. Give us approximate times if you can. I want to get it all down on tape because the preliminary interview will be an important part of the record, if anything more comes of this later."

"Okay." Shane cleared his throat and began to tell exactly what had happened, starting with the wake-up call from Barbara at 2:16 A.M., followed by his call to Longboard Kelly. He told how he drove to Shell Avenue, found the front door open, saw Molar beating his wife. He related the conversation that ensued, telling how he tried to settle it down. Then how Molar, moving toward him, swung the baton at his head, hit him with his fist, pulled his gun, and fired. Shane explained how he returned fire, killing the huge LAPD lieutenant with his 9mm Beretta Mini-Cougar, just moments before Unit X-ray Twelve arrived.

When he finished, he looked up at Mayweather, who was making notes on a pad, a puzzled expression on his face.

"That's everything," Shane finished.

"Tell me about your relationship with Raymond Molar."

"Uh . . . well, he was sort of a mentor, I guess you'd call it. I met him when I went through the Academy. He was conducting a self-defense lecture. He and I were at the same table for lunch. We sort of hit it off, gravitated to each other. He did three street-combat classes while I was there, and we became friends. After I graduated, I ended up in Southwest, in the Seventy-seventh Division. He was a sergeant there. I was still just a probationer, and since we were friends, he got himself assigned as my training officer. He was my partner for the first six months of my tour. After I finished probation, we rode together for six more months."

"Sergeants don't usually ride with partners."



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"Well, in the Seventy-seventh, a lot of the sergeants took a shotgun rider. It's pretty hairy down there. Anyway, we rode together for that last six months, and then I got reassigned. I went to the West Valley Division for four years, then spent six in Metro. I've been back at Southwest for the past six years and in RHD down there for twenty-eight months. Ray was in Central, then Newton, so we didn't see much of each other after that."

"I see." Mayweather made some more notes on his pad. "You see him socially during that first tour in Southwest when you were partnered?"

"Yes, sir, we were friends."

"Right about then you had an Internal Affairs complaint that wasn't sustained, isn't that correct?"

"Excuse me, sir, but I thought I had immunity from background on unsustained IAD complaints." Shane knew that since Mayweather was head of the Special Investigations Division, which supervised IAD, he had access to those old Internal Affairs records. Obviously, the deputy chief had done more than change clothes before coming in for this interview.

Mayweather looked up and lay down his pen. "I'm just trying to determine if, when you were before that Board of Rights in March of '84, you were still partnered with Ray Molar."

"Yes. That was just before we stopped working together."

"Okay." Mayweather picked up his pen. "You say Lieutenant Molar pulled a gun. Did you see it clearly?"

"I was only a few feet away."

"What kind of gun was it?"

"I think it was a European handgun, a Titan Tiger snub-nose thirty-eight is what it looked like."

"That's not a department-approved handgun."

"Well, he was at home. I suppose he can have any kind of weapon he wants at home."

"And then, after you shot him with your Beretta, what happened to his gun?"

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"I guess he dropped it. I don't know, I was kind of jacked up after the shooting."

"Sergeant Scully, do you mind taking a urine test? As you know, you can refuse under the Police Bill of Rights, but I should warn you that in an administrative hearing, unlike a criminal case, your refusal can be viewed by the department as insubordination. You could be brought up on charges. If you *do* refuse, I'll have to send for a DRE to examine you anyway, and his opinion will go in the record and carry the same weight." A DRE was a drug recognition expert who would make a judgment on sobriety by observation, checking vision and reflexes.

"That won't be necessary. I'll take the test, sir," Shane said.

"I'll get the paperwork ready." He leaned over and picked up the phone. "This is Mayweather. Send somebody up from the lab for a urine sample and have whoever's on the duty desk out there dig around and get me an authorization form." He hung up the phone, having never shifted his gaze from Shane. Then he leaned back in his chair and templed his fingers under his chin.

"Barbara Molar is quite an attractive woman."

"Yes, sir, she is. The lieutenant was very lucky."

"Until tonight."

"Well, yes, that's what I meant, sir."

"Right."

They sat in silence for a few moments.

"Did you and Lieutenant Molar retain a friendly relationship after you were reassigned to the Valley Division?"

"Well, sir . . . no. Like I said, we sort of drifted our separate ways."

"I heard you and he got into some kind of scuffle one night, back in '84, just before you were separated as partners."

Shane looked over at Captain Halley for help, but the captain only nodded slightly, encouraging him to keep answering. It was now painfully obvious that Mayweather had someone in the IA Administration Section open his sealed jacket in violation of his

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rights under Section 202. The fight with Steeltooth had been logged because Shane had needed medical attention for his injuries. However, neither he nor Molar had pressed for a hearing, so it went into his sealed record as an unsustained incident. He couldn't prove that Mayweather had opened his file. The deputy chief could claim he had heard about the fight secondhand. Now Shane had to answer the question or face insubordination charges. He felt used and double-crossed.

"I need an answer," Mayweather said. "Was there an altercation?"

"I guess you could say that. We had a kinda problem once."

"What was that all about?"

"Shit, it was nothing. . . . I mean, shoot . . . we . . . we'd been working long hours and I was nervous, facing that Internal Affairs board. I was stressed. Molar was fucking around. We were in the detective squad room in Southwest. He threw ice water on me, so I pushed him and he went down over a chair. If you knew Ray at all, you wouldn't have to ask what happened next."

"What happened next?"

"We went down into the parking garage, and while six or seven guys from the squad stood around and watched, Ray punched out two of my teeth, broke my nose, and pretty much destroyed me."

"And you're not mad about that?"

"Well, for a while I guess, but that was Ray. He and I had just about ended our tour by then, so we unhooked. I was rotating out. He was on the lieutenant's list back then. Pretty high up. The sixth band, I think, so he was going to get his bar in a month or two anyway. We both just moved on."

"And you didn't harbor any resentment? I find that hard to believe."

"Chief, if I could ask . . . has anybody looked at the damage on Barbara Molar's face? Has anybody seen what he did to her? 'Cause if all these questions strike to some other possible motive,

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that's why I went over there. I tried to break it up. He fired first, and I was forced to return fire. He was seconds from killing both of us. I hope you photograph those injuries because all I was trying to do was keep us off Forest Lawn Drive."

"We'll get photographs, don't worry about that."

There was another charged silence in the room that lasted for almost a minute.

"Anything else you want to say for this record?" Mayweather said.

"No, sir. That's what happened. I'm sorry he's dead, but he gave me no choice."

"Okay, then." Mayweather looked at his watch. "This interview is concluded. It is five thirty-five A.M. This tape recording has been continuous, with no shutoffs, and it has been witnessed throughout by Captain Bud Halley." Then he snapped the machine off and rubbed his eyes. "That's it, Sergeant. I'm going to forward this transcript to the Officer Involved Shooting Section of the Robbery/Homicide Division, and they will schedule your Shooting Review Board. Don't sweat it. That board is mandatory with any incident involving firearms."

"I know, sir."

"Then get outta here. Go give the lab tech his sample and go home."

"Yes, sir."

Shane got up and moved past Captain Halley, into the hall. He waited for his CO to come out, thinking they would ride down together and Shane could get a performance critique, but Captain Halley didn't come out. The door was slightly ajar, and he could hear Mayweather and Halley talking. Then suddenly the door was kicked shut, cutting off the conversation and leaving him alone in the hall.